



February 14, 2011

Dear parents,

The American School has administered diagnostic testing in math to all students in grades 2 through 10. The test is prepared and scored by the PLATO™ Learning Corporation and is based upon grade-level appropriate math concepts as adopted by the American School and in accordance with the U.S. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards. The format of the test is an interactive, computer-based test covering all areas of your child's math curriculum for the year. Each grade level will be given a series of 3 tests. Each test is comprised of questions on the same developmental level of the assessed math concepts. They were tested at the beginning of the school year in September, to establish a baseline score, again in January to monitor progress, and finally, will be tested in April, to calculate their growth and understanding.

As you look at your child's results, please note that as your child participates in the testing sessions, the reports will show each session so that you may check their progress. Further, the concepts tested are those which students should have at the *end* of this year. The skills tested, directly reflect the curriculum which is a mixture of 2/3 previously studied concepts and 1/3 new or relatively new concepts. Thus, at the beginning of the year (September), a proficiency score of 40-45 would suggest an adequate skill level upon which to base math studies throughout the year. At midyear (January), scores in the range of 55 and upward would suggest good progress, and at the end of the year, proficiency levels in the range of 68 and upward would indicate a good understanding upon which to begin study of the following year's concepts. Please note, that if a student begins the year with below grade level skills, an increase of 25 or more percentage points would indicate good progress throughout the year. Each subsequent year's math program, however, would be difficult for the student until he/she reaches grade level standard.

It is also important to note that a score of 100% is unreasonable to expect since this would indicate that a student completely understands all newly introduced concepts. In accordance with brain growth and learning theory, new concepts must be revisited, practiced and applied to new situations over an extended period of time (1-3 school years) in order for our brains to make connections with prior knowledge and to incorporate the concept into our long-term thinking skills.

Further, it is important to understand that **the scores on this test are intended to illustrate individual student performance in relationship to each math concept. This test does not compare nor should it be used to compare one student's performance to others in his or her class.** The total score is compiled from the proficiency scores in the various strands or standards of math and each student's profile will be different from others in his (her) class. Additionally, this test is not reflected in the report card, but instead is used as a tool in order to diagnose student strengths and those areas needing more attention.

Should you have additional questions concerning the PLATO® eduTest for Math or your child's performance, we invite you to contact their math teacher, the building level principal or the curriculum office. As always, we share the same goal as you, to ensure a quality education for your child.

Sincerely yours,

Anahi V. Paredes
Curriculum Director